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ABSTRACT

As part of Project IMPACT's efforts to identify and develop procedures for complying with the impact requirements of Public Law 94-482, a case study was made of the Illinois Occupational Survival Skills Project. The purpose of the Occupational Survival Skills Project was to develop curriculum materials to help prepare high school students to understand the basic knowledge, competencies, and behaviors necessary to maintain an occupation. Occupational survival skills relate primarily to the human aspects of working in organizations. A package of 12 learning modules to teach these skills was developed after a survey that identified basic skills, determined which skills were most important, and devised teaching strategies which would be most likely to be used to teach these skills. The package of learning modules developed in the project discusses the following topics: working in organizations; motivation for work; understanding self; interpersonal relations; effective communication; using creativity on the job; problem solving; authority and responsibility; leadership; coping with conflict; coping with change; and adapting and planning for the future. The Occupational Survival Skills package was selected by the National Center for Research in Vocational Education for nationwide distribution. Thus, Project IMPACT found that the project had wide distribution and use throughout the country; and the project elicited very favorable comments from teachers using the packages and from teacher educators. (KC)

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DEVELOPMENT OF PROCEDURES FOR ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT ON VOCATIONAL EDUCATION (PROJECT IMPACT)

Volume 6 -- Assessing the Impact of the Occupational Survival Skills Project

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Donald F. Muirheid, Chairman

ILLINOIS OFFICE OF EDUCATION
Joseph M. Cronin, State Superintendent of Education

CE 029 823

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Springfield, Illinois
August, 1980

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ASSESSING THE IMPACT
OF THE
OCCUPATIONAL SURVIVAL SKILLS PROJECT

By
Project Staff

James A. Leach

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Abstract

In order to identify and develop procedures for complying with the impact of requirements of Public Law 94-482, PROJECT IMPACT studied five problems: (1) how to define impact, (2) how to assess impact, (3) how to show cause and effect relationships between research and development (R&D) activities and changes in vocational education teaching-learning situation, (4) how to predict the probability of impact, and (5) how to facilitate the impact of R&D activities. The methods used in these studies were to review and discuss views of experts and literature related to the problems and to analyze the process of impact in selected cases of R&D activities and exemplary programs in vocational education in Illinois. Findings of PROJECT IMPACT's activities from August 1, 1978 to July 1, 1980 are reported in nine volumes: (1) Context and Principles of Assessing Impact, (2) A Case Study of the Illinois Occupational Curriculum Project, (3) A Case Study of the Illinois Network of Exemplary Occupational Programs for Handicapped and Disadvantaged Students, (4) A Case Study of Illinois Projects in Horticulture, (5) A Case Study of Illinois Career Education Projects at the Awareness Level, (6) A Case Study of the Occupational Survival Skills Project, (7) Case Studies of Two Illinois School Districts with Innovative Vocational Education Programs, (8) A Field Study of Predicting Impact of Research and Development Projects in Vocational and Technical Education, and (9) an Executive Summary.

Volume 6 contains a description of the Occupational Survival Skills Project including background research and development efforts and reports of impact the occupational survival skills teaching materials are having upon vocational programs, teachers, youth, and adults in Illinois and across the nation.

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Overview of PROJECT IMPACT

In 1974, the U.S. Office of Education (USOE) asked the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) to assess the impact of approximately 250 million dollars spent by USOE on vocational education research and development (R&D) activities during the ten years between 1965 and 1974. The NAS committee on Vocational Education Research and Development (COVERD, 1976) reported that the R&D of the decade studies did have impact on curriculum development but did not have documented widespread impact on the knowledge, skills or employability of large numbers of students. National evaluations of vocational R&D in addition to the COVERD report have been similarly critical (Development Associates, 1975; Rand Corporation, 1975; Comptroller General of the United States, 1974). Acting upon these reports, Congress passed the Educational Amendments of 1976 (Public Law 94-482) which mandated that contracts for R&D in vocational education not be allowable unless the applicant could "demonstrate a reasonable probability that the contract would result in improved teaching techniques or curriculum materials that would be used in a substantial number of classrooms or other learning situations within five years after termination of such contracts" (Federal Register, 1977).

PROJECT IMPACT is a state funded study designed to develop procedures for assessing the impact of vocational education research and development efforts on vocational education. The primary purpose of the study is to identify and develop procedures for complying with the impact requirement of Public Law 94-482.

The study addresses itself to three problem areas: (1) how to define impact, (2) how to assess impact, and (3) how to show a cause-and-effect

relationship between project activities and changes in the vocational education teaching-learning situations. The study also addressed two subsidiary problems: (1) how to predict the probability of impact and (2) how to manage on-going contracts to increase impact probability.

The methods used to conduct this study were to review literature related to the problem areas, to interview individuals who have experience and expertise in the problem areas, and to analyze the process of impact of several programs of related projects which were funded by the Illinois Office of Education/Division of Adult, Vocational and Technical Education/ Research and Development Section and one project funded by the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA).

The major activity of this study was analyzing the programs (cases) of related R&D projects. For the first year, it was decided to select two cases for "top-down" analysis and two cases for "bottom-up" analysis (see Volume 1, Appendix A, p. 43). The project staff referred to these types of retrospective analysis as "tracking." It was anticipated that the two types of tracking would produce different insights about impact. For example, bottom-up tracking might better identify "bottlenecks" to impact than would top-down tracking while "top-down" tracking might be more effective in relating project intents and project outcomes. One staff member was assigned as "tracking manager" for each of the four cases and was instructed to keep a detailed log of her/his activities (e.g., identifying documents, retrieving documents, identifying key people and interviewing them, recording data, analyzing data).

Nominations for the first four case studies were sought from members of PROJECT IMPACT's Advisory Committee, project consultants, and project staff members. The following cases were selected for "top-down" tracking:

1. "A Research and Development Project in Occupational Education" (The Illinois Occupational Curriculum Project -- I.O.C.P.) which was developed by Joliet Junior College and funded by them and by the Illinois Department of Adult, Vocational and Technical Education in fiscal years 1970-72.
2. "The Illinois Network of Exemplary Occupational Programs for Handicapped and Disadvantaged Students." At the time the case study was initiated, the network was in its fourth year of operation. It was in the "dissemination" stage and IOE/DAVTE had funded Illinois State University to coordinate dissemination for the Network's eight demonstration projects.

The third and fourth cases, which were selected for "bottom-up" tracking, were:

3. "Illinois Projects in Horticulture." IOE/DAVTE funded some twelve R&D projects in horticulture between 1967 and 1978. Both private and public schools participated in these R&D efforts.
4. "Illinois Career Education Projects at the Awareness Level." IOE/DAVTE funded three or more major projects in this area between 1970 and 1978, and CETA began funding one for the Illinois Department of Corrections in 1975.

During its second year PROJECT IMPACT studied the "Occupational Survival Skills Project" and "Two Illinois School Districts with Innovative Vocational Education Programs" and developed a model for an "Impact Assessment System for the Illinois Board of Education/Department of Adult, Vocational and Technical Education/Research and Development Section."

PROJECT IMPACT's activities for the 1979 and 1980 fiscal years are reported in nine volumes. Volume 1 -- Context and Principles of Assessing Impact -- contains an introduction to PROJECT IMPACT, a review of literature and views of experts in regard to planned educational change and impact, the methods used to conduct impact case studies, a concise listing of references used during Phase 1 activities, and appended materials such as the initial project proposal and data collection instruments which were developed for use in case studies. Supplemental reports of the project are contained in the following volumes:

Volume 2 -- A Case Study of the "Illinois Occupational Curriculum Project"

Volume 3 -- A Case Study of the "Illinois Network of Exemplary Occupational Programs for Handicapped Disadvantaged Students"

Volume 4 -- A Case Study of "Illinois Projects in Horticulture"

Volume 5 -- A Case Study of "Illinois Career Education Projects at the Awareness Level"

Volume 6 -- A Case Study of the "Occupational Survival Skills Project"

Volume 7 -- Case Studies of "Two Illinois School Districts With Innovative Vocational Education Programs"

Volume 8 -- A Field Study of "Predicting Impact of Research and Development Projects in Vocational and Technical Education"

Volume 9 -- Executive Summary of Volumes 1-8 and Conclusions and Recommendations for assessing the Impact of Vocational Education Research and Development on Vocational Education

DESCRIPTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE OCCUPATIONAL SURVIVAL SKILLS PROJECT

The purpose of the Occupational Survival Skills Project was to develop curriculum materials to help prepare high school students to understand the basic knowledge, competencies and behaviors necessary to maintain an occupation. The project was completed under a contractual agreement between the Department of Vocational and Technical Education, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and the Department of Adult, Vocational and Technical Education, Illinois State Board of Education in 1979. The Project Director was Dr. Robert E. Nelson.

Occupational Survival Skills relate primarily to the "human" aspects of working in organizations. These skills are generally taught only to management personnel. Most of the inservice training programs for workers pertain to upgrading "technical" skills and have very little relationship to "people" skills.

In most schools, vocational education programs do an adequate job of preparing students for the technical aspects of specific occupations. However, teachers may neglect teaching humanistic aspects of work which are important to "surviving" in an occupation. If topics such as interpersonal relations are taught in vocational education programs, they are usually very elementary and are taught out of context from the real world of work. Consequently, young workers may spend much time early in their careers becoming knowledgeable about "human" skills through trial and error. This results in a loss of valuable time on the job and may lead to inefficiency on the part of individual employees.

The Occupational Survival Skills teaching materials have been designed to provide teachers of vocational education programs with adequate information and curriculum materials to prepare students for occupational maintenance and mobility.

Background Research and Development[1]

The initial task in developing the Occupational Survival Skills modules was to identify the competencies that workers need in order to maintain an occupation. This was accomplished through an extensive survey of current occupational literature as well as information obtained from workers, educators and students. A list of over 500 skills was compiled. An analysis of this list by over 300 persons resulted in a list of 27 basic skills which are necessary for minimum acceptable performance in an occupation.

A study was conducted to determine how important workers consider each of these 27 basic skills in maintaining their own occupations.[2] The study revealed that although there were some differences among the opinions of different occupational groups, most of the skills were considered important by workers regardless of their occupations.

Two additional studies were conducted to determine the opinions of (a) students and parents,[3] and (b) teachers, counselors, and school ad-

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[1]Robert E. Nelson, "Model for Development and Implementation of General Occupational Skills and Attitudes," International Journal of Instructional Media, Vol. 4, No. 2, 1976-77, pp. 175-184.

[2]Sharon Lund O'Neil, "Worker Perceptions of Skills Necessary for Survival in the World of Work." Ph.D. dissertation, University of Illinois, 1976. Also see Sharon Lund O'Neil and Robert E. Nelson, "Career Maintenance and Mobility Factors -- Occupational Survival Skills," Journal of Vocational Education Research, Spring, 1976, Vol. 14, No. 2, pp. 34-42; "Workers View Occupational Survival As Combination of Skills," Delta Pi Epsilon Journal, January, 1978, Vol. XX, No. 1, pp. 13-19.

ministrators[4] regarding the importance of teaching occupational survival skills. A high degree of agreement among the different educational groups indicated that these groups felt that certain skills should be taught in the schools. However, differences did exist between the opinions of workers and the various educational groups regarding the importance of specific skills.[5]

Another study was conducted to determine which instructional strategies teachers would be most likely to use for teaching occupational survival skills.[6] The results of this study indicated that teaching strategies vary with the specific content being taught. Overall, the teachers surveyed favored strategies in which students are actively involved and interact with each other. The study also indicated specific teaching strategies such as group discussion, problem solving, and role playing were consid-

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[3]Thomas J. Scanlan, "A Study to Determine the Opinions of Students and Parents Concerning the Teaching of Skills Necessary for Survival in the World of Work." Unpublished master's thesis, University of Illinois, 1976. Also see Robert E. Nelson and Thomas J. Scanlan, "Parents and Students' Perceptions of Occupational Survival Skills," Vocational Guidance Quarterly, March, 1977, Vol. 25, No. 3, pp. 217-224.

[4]Kent D. Firson, "A Study to Determine the Opinions of School Personnel Concerning the Teaching of Skills Necessary for Survival in the World of Work," Unpublished master's thesis, University of Illinois, 1975.

[5]Robert E. Nelson, "Comparison of Perceptions Concerning Occupational Survival Skills, Journal of Studies in Technical Careers, pending publication.

[6]Joyce Nies Richardson, "A Study to Identify the Instructional Strategies Teachers Would Be Most Likely to Teach the Skills Necessary for Survival in the World of Work." Unpublished master's thesis, 1976. Also see Robert E. Nelson and Joyce Nies Richardson, "Instructional Technical for Teaching Essential Work Skills." Journal of Industrial Teacher Education pending publication.

ered by teachers to be most appropriate for teaching the content areas included in the occupational survival skills.

Description of Modules

Because the 27 occupational skills which have been identified were too narrow in scope to be taught as individual units of study, broader topics for instruction were developed to be used as modules of instruction. The following are the twelve module topics and the questions to which each module attempts to provide answers relating to various aspects of working:

1. Working in Organizations: What is work? Where do people work? What are organizations and what are their common characteristics? How are organizations different from other types of groups? Why do people start organizations? Why do people join organizations?

2. Motivation for Work: Why do people work? What makes people try to do their best at work? How can jobs be made motivational? Why are motivational needs important in work situations? How can workers achieve job satisfaction?

3. Understanding Self: What makes people behave the way they do in their jobs? Why is work important to people? What are motives? What are interests, values and attitudes and how do they affect work behavior? Why is it important to understand people in work situations? How can people be understood by their overt behavior and work?

4. Interpersonal Relations: What are good interpersonal relationships? Why is it important to have good relationships on the job? What is the role of feelings, values, attitudes, human needs, prejudice, self-concept and perception in interpersonal relations?

5. Effective Communication: What is involved in the communication process? Why is effective communication important on the job? What are some major barriers to communication? Why is it important to write, read and speak well on the job? What is the importance of feedback to effective job performance?

6. Using Creativity on the Job: What is creativity? Why is creativity important to job success? What are specific ways of being creative on the job? How can creative workers be helpful to the organization?

7. Problem Solving: What are the steps in problem solving? How can problems at work be identified and solved? How can workers use the problem solving approach in their jobs?

8. Authority and Responsibility: What is authority? How is authority different from power and influence? Why do certain people in work situations have authority? Why do people accept authority at work? How can an individual influence people without having authority over them? What does job responsibility mean? What do employers expect of workers when they hire them? How can a person be a responsible worker?

9. Leadership: What are the types of leadership? How do different styles of leadership affect productivity? Can people develop a specific leadership style? What makes a supervisor a leader? How can leadership qualities be developed?

10. Coping with Conflict: What is conflict and how do conflicts arise at work? What are the basic sources of conflict? What are the conflicts arising out of worker roles? What conflicts arise out of organizational positions? What kinds of conflicts arise due to technology? How can conflicts be avoided or minimized? How can conflict be turned into competition?

11. Coping with Change: Why is change inevitable? Why do organizations have to change? What kinds of changes happen most frequently at work? How do changes in work affect the lifestyles of employees? How can some changes be anticipated? Are some workers able to accept changes more easily than others? How can workers cope with changes at work?

12. Adapting and Planning for the Future: What major changes are likely to happen in working patterns in the future? How can changes in work be anticipated? How will workers be affected by these changing patterns in work? How can workers plan their own lives in terms of possible changes?

Work is an important aspect of most people's lives and from all indications will continue to be so into the future. The work people do deter-

mines to a great extent their psychological, social and economic security, and their satisfaction in life. Vocational education programs should include the teaching of humanistic aspects of work which will help the student develop skills that are applicable to a wide range of occupations and careers. Teaching occupational survival skills will help to meet the current occupational needs and future career aspirations of many vocational education students.

Organization of Modules

For convenience in teaching, each module is divided into sessions. Each session contains a specific objective and can be completed in one or two class periods. For each session there are:

1. A brief statement on importance of the session topic and its relevance to "survival" in work;
2. A variety of instructional activities for students;
3. Guidelines for instructors; and
4. Follow-up discussion questions.

The Occupational Survival Skills modules can be used in a wide variety of educational settings. The curriculum should not be considered as a fixed or rigid course of study; these materials can be adapted in any manner which meets specific educational objectives.

Teachers in a variety of academic and vocational fields were instrumental in field testing and suggesting improvement for the modules. The responses of students during field testing were valuable in providing the project staff with guidelines for needed revisions. The modules were revised and rewritten on the basis of the feedback from students and teachers during field testing.[7]

[7]For more information of field testing and evaluation see James A. Leach, "Influences of the Occupational Survival Skills Modules on the Attainment of Skills and Attitudes Toward Employment of Selected High School Students." Ph.D. dissertation, University of Illinois, 1978.

Use of Modules

The twelve instructional modules can be incorporated into classroom instruction in the following ways:

1. Activities from selected modules can be integrated into a specific course
2. Modules can be incorporated into various courses within a department
3. Modules can be taught as a special course

The Occupational Survival Skills modules have been used successfully with a wide range of students in a variety of educational settings. Some specific educational settings are listed below:

Office occupations programs

Agricultural occupations programs

Health occupations programs

Home Economics occupations programs

Industrial-oriented occupations programs

Career-English and communication program

Career education programs (K-12)

Classes for students with special needs (secondary work experience programs)

Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) programs

Cooperative Work Training Programs (CWT)

Work Experience Career Exploration Programs

Distributive Education Programs

Career guidance programs (high school and community college levels)

Adult education programs

Teacher Education programs

This report highlights the impact that these teaching materials have had on teachers and students utilizing them in the classroom. Although the following descriptions are not necessarily all inclusive, they do represent a substantial effort to document the impact of the Occupational Survival Project to this time.

ILLINOIS PROJECT HAS NATIONAL IMPACT

Robert E. Taylor, Executive Director of the National Center for Research in Vocational Education (NCRVE) at the Ohio State University, emphasizes that vocational education must respond to growing and developing occupations. To meet this challenge the NCRVE organized a group called the Special Packages Project staff to identify, select, and disseminate instructional resources which are practical and easily adopted models, materials, and information. These special packages are to be used by vocational education teachers to respond to the occupational needs of students.

Selection criteria for resource materials included in the Special Packages are:

1. Relevance to Occupational Area
2. Targeted Audiences
3. Instructional Program Design (Competency-based, Modularized)
4. Validation/Evaluation Data
5. Reproductability
6. Cost of Implementation/Adaptation
7. Sensitivity to the Special Needs of Groups
8. Flexibility
9. Innovativeness
10. Marketability
11. Sex and Ethnic Fairness
12. Availability of the Materials

The "Methods and Materials for Teaching Occupational Survival Skills" developed by the Illinois State Board of Education, DAVTE, and the Uni-

versity of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign was chosen as one of the special packages by the NCRVE Special Packages Project for national distribution. Copies of the Occupational Survival Skills teaching materials were distributed to Curriculum Centers, State Liaison Representatives, and Research Coordinating Units across the nation.

A total of 2,240 copies of the Occupational Survival Skills materials have been distributed on the local, state, and national level to accommodate requests for the modules. The Curriculum Publications Clearinghouse at Western Illinois University has printed approximately 4,240 copies thus far.

The dissemination of the curriculum materials has prompted requests for workshops to be held in Illinois and throughout the nation relating to the implementation and use of the Occupational Survival Skills modules by teachers in Cooperative Vocational Education, Career Education, Special Education and general education classes. The workshop presentations consisted of awareness, orientation, and adaptation of Occupational Survival Skills materials. Workshops were held in Illinois at Career Guidance Centers, Cooperative Vocational Education Conferences, Pre-employment and Placement Conferences, the Illinois Vocational Association Convention, in University of Illinois extension courses, and other areas as requested. Workshops held in other states by request were: the Statewide Conference for Bilingual Vocational Education in Kentucky, the West Virginia State Vocational Association Conference, the National Network for Curriculum Coordination Conference at Denver, Colorado, the Computerized Vocational Information System National Conference in San Francisco, California, and at the Arizona State Vocational Association Conference.

In Ohio four workshops were held to reach teachers from each of the Vocational Education Planning Districts in the state. Also in Ohio, a presentation was made at the State Vocational Directors Conference at the NCRVE. Other states showing interest in the Occupational Survival Skills teaching materials by requesting copies of the materials and further information are Louisiana, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, New York, Iowa, Vermont and Tennessee. Agencies requesting these materials were, Career Guidance Centers, Vocational Education Centers, Vocational Curriculum Laboratories, State Colleges, Job Corps Centers, Comprehensive Employment and Training Act Centers, and numerous high school districts. The following are examples of the widespread interest reported from several states throughout the nation.

An assistant coordinator of a Youth Demonstration Project, which is part of the Recruitment and Training Program in New York Comments that the Occupational Survival Skills materials are enlightening and enhance further their 'Careers Today' - Youth Demonstration Project.

An administrator of a large suburban Detroit youth work-experience program says, "I am most anxious to obtain survival materials for use with our enrollees."

A teacher/coordinator for the career development center at Illinois Bell Telephone in Chicago is very interested in using Occupational Survival Skills materials in their program.

A professor at the University of Wyoming will use the occupational survival skills materials in industrial education and career education at the teacher education level.

A director for Resource Development Linn-Benton Community College in Oregon, feels their population is much different than those in public

high school but the Occupational Survival Skills materials have significant relevance to their programs and the needs of disadvantaged vocational students.

A career advisor for Cooperative Educational Service Agency #7 Youth Programs in Wisconsin says "Occupational survival materials are most valuable to a program such as ours. This program provides group sessions and workshops which focus on such areas as job conduct, job survival, and motivation for work."

In North Carolina a Human Resource Development Instructor says, "After reviewing the occupational survival aterials, this material would be extremely valuable to our Human Resources Development Program. This program is an occupational orientation and motivation program for unemployed, underemployed, and disadvantaged adults."

A Madison, Wisconsin high school Home Economics teacher indicates she will use the Occupational Survival Skills in teaching her vocational home economics courses.

The department chairman of a comprehensive high school in New Jersey which has an extensive vocational program comments that "the Occupational Survival Skills materials provide all kinds of wonderful possibilities."

The head of the English department at State Technical Institute in Knoxville, Tennessee, talks of using the occupational survival skills materials as a follow-up or alternative to some of the in-class activities currently being employed in their Human Relations classes.

A psychology instructor at the Johnson Technical Institute in Springfield, North Carolina comments they are using a basic psychology text which is not meeting the needs of their students. This instructor plans to use some of the Occupational Survival Skills materials to replace this void.

The senior instructor at the Jobs For Youth, in Chicago sees the Occupational Survival Skills as being well suited for their staff and clients that are a part of Jobs For Youth.

From Ontario High School, Ontario, California, an instructor involved with writing the district's curriculum for a Life Skills course which the district has made a mandatory class says, "we intend to incorporate many of the curriculum areas outlined in the Occupational Survival Skills."

Santa Rosa High School in California intends to incorporate some of the Occupation Survival Skills materials into their curriculum. They intend to fit these materials into a course they presently teach called Job Oriented Business Skills (JOBS).

A director at the Indiana University-South Bend says they are conducting a CETA training project and are interested in using the Occupational Survival Skills materials in this project and may use them for some credit-free courses.

A Career English teacher in Dubuque, Iowa commented "After struggling through my first year of teaching Career English, I was wondering how to upgrade this course for next year. The Career English course seemed an uneasy marriage between basic English skills and practice in communication. The Occupational Survival Skills seem to offer a solid, life-related structure for an English course designed to prepare students for communication 'on-the-job'. I'd like to say thanks for bringing order out of chaos." Next year she plans to revise her curriculum to include the use of Occupational Survival Skills for Career English and for business courses.

A program director for Ser-Jobs For Progress, Inc. in Washington, D.C. says they have a non-profit Hispanic employment and training orga-

nization. They are working with in-school youth providing career awareness and job placement for their participants. They feel the Occupational Survival Skills materials would be very helpful in their training program.

As the previous paragraphs indicate the Occupational Survival Skills modules are an example of a state funded vocational education project that has had considerable impact throughout the nation for many types of students with varying special needs.

SURVIVAL SKILLS CALLED NECESSARY BY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

A Cooperative Work Training (CWT) teacher in an Illinois high school comments on the usefulnes and value of Occupational Survival Skills curriculum materials for teaching to students.

"For the past two years I have taught CWT classes composed of approximately fifty students, mostly Juniors and Seniors and some Sophomores. These students may be described as having academic abilities which range from third grade to college, many have special needs, many are failing, truant behaviorally disordered, economically disadvantaged, unmotivated, lacking in goals, and potential dropouts."

"The Occupational Survival Skills curriculum materials have provided me with the educational tools to motivate and completely turn around the poor attitudes of my students. The Occupational Survival Skills materials have provided me with direction as a CWT teacher."

"I have been using the Occupational Survival Skills teaching materials and consider them a God Send! These materials are exactly what I have been searching for and struggling to develop for my students. I use them almost every day and find they are excellent because the modules are very comprehensive and include valid and current occupational information. Each session within a module develops a concept that can be used independently or with other curriculum materials and resources, and the content is career and vocational oriented and easily incorporated into the curriculum. The variety of teaching techniques employed by the OSS materials are well received by the students."

"A recent survey of students' opinions in my classes have indicated their awareness that students need to develop skills to prepare themselves to be successful workers and adults. The students in my classes have commented that the teaching materials include relevant concepts and are thought of as necessary skills for occupational survival."

"I have noticed that fewer students are leaving or being asked to leave, their training stations this year. Several employers with whom I have worked tell me that my students seem a bit more mature, and ready to work this year. It is my opinion that the Occupational Survival Skills materials I am using this year have much to do with this. On a scale of one to ten, I would rate the OSS materials TEN. I highly recommend these materials for vocational and career education teaching."

The following remarks are examples of those made by high school vocational education students in Illinois when asked to give their opinions of the Occupational Survival Skills modules:

> "These (Modules) teach about problems at work and at home. They're worth doing."
>
> "They're good because they're not taught in any other class."
>
> "The Modules are good because they teach you about yourself and others and how to relate, which is necessary."
>
> "They're good because they teach you about things that happen in the real world."
>
> "The Modules are mostly useful for work but also for personal life."
>
> "The Modules have helped everybody in class get their heads together. They have helped me to know myself and feel good about myself."
>
> "Teaching things like the Modules would help keep people in school. If all high schools would use them, there would be less dropouts."
>
> "People who leave or graudate from high school are not ready for work. They should have an Occupational Survival Skills class first."

As might be expected after reading these comments, the response by students to the curriculum materials has been overwhelmingly positive in virtually every learning environment where students have been asked to offer their opinions.

A CURRICULUM THAT LINKS SPECIAL EDUCATION TO VOCA IONAL EDUCATION

An innovative program designed to provide in-service teacher training relating to the teaching of Occupational Survival Skills materials to special needs students, Cooperative Vocational Education (CVE) and other vocational education students has been developed to serve the occupational needs of these groups. An Illinois State Board of Education special needs consultant coordinating the program reports that this program is operating in a 30 county area of southern Illinois. A primary objective of this program is to provide a linkage between Special Needs students and vocational education. This linkage is accomplished by incorporating the Occupational Survival Skills materials as course content into the existing curriculum. An objective of the program is to provide potential dropouts with skills that will enhance their employability in the event they chose to leave school early. The Occupational Survival Skills materials are included in CVE programs and vocational education classes as a unit of instruction for job seeking and job survival skills.

Another program whose intent is to employ the Occupational Survival Skills materials as teaching material for special needs students in the Indiana School for the Deaf. The coordinator for this program writes the following:

"Many students of their handicap (deafness) and the resulting communication problem, fall far behind in their attempts to prepare for living and working in a hearing world. The Cooperative Education Program at I.S.D. requires students enrolled in the program to spend about five hours per eek in a classroom where we try to help them learn about ca-

reers, work, and the themselves. This would be a perfect place to use the Occupational Survival Skills materials."

Several requests have been received from special education teachers, directors and administrators across the nation for information concerning the Occupational Survival Skills. The curriculum materials are being sought to introduce a much needed general vocational education component to many special education programs.

OCCUPATIONAL SURVIVAL SKILLS FILL THE GAP IN A CETA EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING PROGRAM

A job counselor in the south Chicago area designed an innovative project called CETA Operation 25 that is serving those students between the ages of 17 and 21 who, for one reason or another, have dropped out of high school. The main objectives of this program are: to earn a high school diploma, to develop employable skills, and to secure full-time employment upon graduation. He viewed the Occupational Survival Skills modules as teaching materials that provide sufficient information and stimulation so that his students might be able to bridge the gap between success and failure in life. After reviewing and using the modules with his students he made the following observations.

"The Understanding Yourself module is the one about which I got the most excited. It is an excellent module!"

"Once the individuals have begun to come to grips with themselves, they can continue to learn about their own personal needs and how those needs must be satisfied in their work if they are to be happy and successful. This is what the motivation for work module attempts to do, and in fact does quite well. I found each of the lessons to be quite interesting for the students as well as essential to their personal growth."

He called the Interpersonal Relations module excellent and stated that "the module does a good job of teaching the skill of expressing one's feelings."

The CETA job counselor also indicated that the Problem Solving module gave the students some real insight into just how good their problem solving skills really are.

He commented that students were very interested, showing eagerness and emotion when utilizing the module on Coping with Organizational Conflict, and that the Leadership module contained considerable information which surprised the students. "It was as if they never realized how much was actually involved in being a leader. The realization that a leader is human and has feelings just like the rest of us also seemed to set in. The mood of the class working with this module was often one of - "thanks a lot, no one ever told me that before."

The counselor summarized his comments about the Occupational Survival Skills modules by saying; "As a rule, I found it very difficult to stick to a fifty minute time limit for each of the sessions in a module. Since I thought the information contained in the program was so important, I didn't want to leave anything undone. As a whole, I thought that the Occupational Survival Skills program was excellent! Similar to any classroom material, it should be used in conjunction with the needs of a particular class. However, I do think it provides a little something for everyone and as a base for a class would be excellent. I feel so strongly about this that I would go so far as to say that a course in Occupational Survival Skills should be required for all students at the high school level!"

ADULTS FIND LEARNING OCCUPATIONAL SURVIVAL SKILLS REWARDING AND IMPORTANT

A Community College teacher in Illinois comments that the Occupational Survival Skills are excellent teaching material for her adult office management course. Adult students leave her class remarking they have learned a great deal about job survival and have had an enjoyable time doing so.

She remarked that "Adults enjoy working with the Occupational Survival Skills materials because much of their personal experience can be equated with these skills and this enables them to be contributors to class discussion. This is important since many adults who have been out of school for many years feel insecure when taking formal education classes again."

"The adults in my classes have commented that the Occupational Survival Skills materials are extremely relevant to life's experiences. These adult students are able to draw on personal experiences and this enables them to be contributers to class disucssions with authority. These students are drawn into discussions before they realize what is happening, insecurity dissolves and the adult student becomes a confident and enthusiastic learner."

She concluded by saying that "The materials are so well prepared that they are indeed every busy teacher's answer to presenting good material in a dynamic way. Any teacher who uses these materials can conduct class sessions that become stimulating and interesting."

Orienting adults to the "human" aspects of work which they encounter on the job may be as important as teaching the "technical" aspects of their

work. This instructor has found that most of her adult students have been trained to do just one thing. They have been encouraged to become specialists. However, for many, their specialities are no longer needed in the work force. She indicates that the Occupational Survival Skills encourage the development of a wider spectrum of human abilities that are applicable to successful performance at most all jobs.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS USE SURVIVAL SKILLS AS CURRICULUM FOR CAREER AWARENESS

Elementary teachers in Chicago school district #4 have worked with the Department of Vocational and Technical Education at the University of Illinois during a summer workshop to adapt the content of the Occupational Survival Skills modules for use as career awareness information in their classrooms. The forty-five teachers utilized the modules as a basis for adding a general career awareness theme to their existing career education programs. One teacher made the following comments.

"Occupational Survival Skills is an excellent guide in a much needed subject area. The very fact that so many workers fail in the human aspects of holding a job is an indication of the need for these skills to be emphasized. For years teachers have taught a majority of the basic skills incidentally in various subject areas, but evidently transfer of learning has not occurred. It is my belief that the students have not perceived this type of learning in school as being similar to life or job situations. Therefore, teachers must help develop this awareness and perception of the similarities. That is what this book does so well. It pulls out the skills, examines them, and then puts them back into realistic, possible job activities and experiences. The modules can be used as a valuable starting point from which the elementary school teacher can utilize the basic skills and begin to lay the groundwork in a fundamental manner suitable for the class's maturity and understanding."

Another teacher wrote that "This is the first manual I have used that covers the necessary human skills required for work. The basic ideas included in the text can be adapted to almost any area of human existence

and utilized with most levels of school age children. The children must learn that work is satisfying, and that they can fulfill their own needs through helping themselves and others."

One teacher who had previously used the modules commented that "Perhaps, one of the greatest advantages of the modules is its flexibility for use. I had the opportunity to use the Interpersonal Relations module with a group of eight year olds and I was pleased to discover how adaptable the materials were to this age group."

"It is important to teach students to know the world as it is, and not as it appears in story books. Students today learn early from TV, comic books, etc. that there is much error, disease, and corruption in the world. I commend the project staff for the development of curriculum materials so desperately needed at a time when the world of work is often a question of how do I survive?"

The workshop will be offered again in Chicago this summer for teachers in Chicago school district #3.

SURVIVAL SKILLS VIEWED AS APPROPRIATE CURRICULUM FOR COOPERATIVE EDUCATION

A study was conducted at the University of Illinois to determine the perspectives and practices of Cooperative Vocational Education (CVE) teacher/coordinators' views relating to the teaching of Occupational Survival Skills to CVE students.[1] This study resulted in the finding that teacher/coordinators of CVE programs in Illinois secondary schools considered the Occupational Survival Skills to be quite appropriate teaching material for CVE students. The degree of importance with which teacher/coordinators viewed the skills was apparent when they almost unaminously recommended that the Occupational Survival Skills should be taught in the CVE curriculum. The study results also indicated that all the teacher/coordinators surveyed were currently teaching the skills to some degree.

A faulty member at the Arizona State University reports over 125 cooperative education teachers in that state have used the Occupational Survival Skills materials. The general comment made by these teachers was "the materials are useful and relevant to what is happening in the workplace." A detailed evaluation of the Occupational Survival Skills modules indicated that one-hundred percent of the teachers said the modules provided the teacher with adequate background information and all the modules related directly to knowledge their students needed to know about the world of work.

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[1]Robert A. Chiti, "Perspectives and Practices of Cooperative Vocational Education Teacher/Coordinators Relating to the Teaching of Occupational Survival Skills to Cooperative Vocational Education Students." Doctoral dissertation, University of Illinois, 1980.

A vocational education program coordinator and guidance counselor for Edwardsville, Illinois schools reported on the use of Occupational Survival Skills teaching materials by cooperative vocational education teachers in her district by noting the following. The Distributive Education teacher/ coordinator writes, "I use these teaching materials as a supplement to the regular classroom materials. I use the complete module and occassionally parts of a module as it relates to what we are working on in the class. This year I am using the complete module on Authority and Responsibility in my Introduction to Selling class and Distributive Education class due to the fact that the textbook materials in the subject are not as complete as in the Occupational Survival Skills material. I have found the students like the modules as a change from the traditional classroom work."

Other cooperative education teachers in Illinois find the modules "Coping with Change" and "Coping with Conflict" very valuable to help resolve problems as they arise while students are on-the-job. The instructors of the Diversified Occupations and Home Economics Related Occupations programs said they use the Occupational Survival Skills materials continually. They said, "The materials are easy to use, well organized, and very effective." They coordinate these materials with other course content used in the related classes. Both of the instructors commented. "The students in our classes are very receptive to these materials and have expressed enjoyment when learning about them." The Home Economics Related Occupations instructor said, "The modules on Interpersonal Relations, Problem Solving, and Effective Communication are used in my Survival Living course and have proven to be very valuable to me and my students."

The Special Education department instructors reported they are using the modules of Understanding Self, Interpersonal Relations, and Effective Communication in their Introduction to Work classes. These teachers offered the opinion that "these modules are very applicable in meeting their students' needs." These skills are taught prior to job entry and are considered as necessary preparation for occupational survival.

The vocational education and guidance coordinator in the Edwardsville schools wrote, "After having surveyed the cooperative vocational education staff, I have found both the teachers and their students believe the Occupational Survival Skills are viable and necessary materials for occupational preparation."

FUTURE IMPACT ASSURED THROUGH TEACHER EDUCATION

The Occupational Survival Skills modules are being used as part of the course content in vocational teacher education programs at the University of Illinois. One teacher educator writes the following.

"Students from the business education program become familiar with the modules by presenting them to their peers. After this first encounter with these modules students then chose one or two of them to present at various community educational settings. Our students enjoy teaching the modules because the objectives are clearly defined, resources are suggested and the lessons are organized. A beginning teacher has no problem eliciting student participation and discipline problems are at a minimum due to the nature of the material. I have and always will incorporate these materials in any class I teach."

Teacher educators from other universities in Illinois and across the nation have also expressed interest in using the modules in their programs. It would appear that the impact these materials are having in vocational education classrooms will continue for some time to come. Not only are experienced teachers utilizing the modules, but new teachers are also being encouraged to incorporate them into their teaching.